

Washington, DC -- Following the passage of critical higher education legislation, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) today announced the names of the University and Colleges Presidents, professors and administrators who will serve on his Higher Education Advisory Committee.

“In today’s global economy, nothing is more important for our region’s future than our commitment to educating tomorrow’s workforce,” **Arcuri said**. “Today, I continue my commitment to expanding access to higher education for local families by making sure we grow our economy and provide students with the tools they need to succeed. The 24th district is home to many outstanding colleges and universities that provide high quality education and serve as critical components of the Upstate New York economy. I look forward to working with these educational leaders to build our region’s greatest resource.”

Arcuri’s 24th Congressional District’s Higher Education Advisory Committee Includes:

Mr. Todd Hutton, President, Utica College

Dr. Anne Marie Murray, President, Herkimer College Community College

Ms. Joan Stewart, President, Hamilton College

Ms. Lois DeFleur, President, Binghamton University

Dr. Barbara Risser, President, Finger Lakes Community College

Mr. Bob Baber, Dean, Munson-Williams-Proctor School of Art

Dr. Randall VanWagoner, President, Mohawk Valley Community College

Ms. Carol Blazina, Vice President for Community Relations, SUNY Oneonta

Mr. Eric Bitterbaum, President, SUNY Cortland

Mr. Henry Steck, Professor of International Studies, SUNY Cortland

Ms. Meredith Bonham, Assistant to the President, Hamilton College

Mr. Alan Donovan, former President, SUNY Oneonta

Mr. Michael Frame, Director of Federal Relations, Binghamton University

Mr. Mark Gearan, President, Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Mr. Carl E. Haynes, President Tompkins Cortland Community College

Dr. Judith Kirkpatrick, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Utica College

Mr. Daniel Larson, President, Cayuga Community College

Ms. Marianne Monahan, President, St. Elizabeth College of Nursing

Dr. John Nader, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, SUNY Delhi (and Oneonta Mayor)

Mr. Daniel Sargent, Assistant to the President, Herkimer County Community College

Mr. Nicholas Laino, Officer in Charge, Herkimer County Community College

Dr. Thomas Topping, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of the College, Finger Lakes Community College

Ms. Kim Muller, Former Mayor of Oneonta; Director of Grants Development, SUNY College at Oneonta

Arcuri joined an overwhelming bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives yesterday to approve the Higher Education Opportunity Act (H.R. 4137) Conference Report, to address rising college costs and remove other barriers that keep qualified students from pursuing higher education.

H.R. 4137 is a comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, the primary federal law aimed at expanding college access for low- and middle-income students. If enacted, this would be the first time the Higher Education Act was reauthorized since 1998. The Senate also voted to approve H.R.4137 yesterday; the bill will now be sent to the President's desk for his signature.

According to a recent College Board report, tuition and fees at four-year public institutions have increased 31 percent, accounting for inflation, over the last five years. In New York, 243,696 students take out need-based loans each year at public four-year schools – causing a typical student to accumulate \$14,276 of debt. In the 24th district alone, there are 12,681 borrowers, attending our eight four-year colleges and universities and four two-year institutions.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act would address these rising prices by encouraging colleges to rein in price increases, ensuring that states maintain their commitments to higher education funding, providing students and families with consumer friendly information on college pricing, and streamlining the federal student financial aid application process.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act would also:

- Allow students to receive year-round Pell Grant scholarships;
- Strengthen college readiness and support programs for minority and low-income students;
- Increase college aid and support programs for veterans and military families;
- Improve safety on college campuses and help schools recover and rebuild after a disaster;
- Ensure equal college opportunities and fair learning environments for students with disabilities; and
- Strengthen our nation's workforce and economic competitiveness by boosting science, technology, and foreign language educational opportunities.

This legislation builds on the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, the largest federal investment in student aid since the 1944 GI Bill, which was signed into law in September and strongly supported by Arcuri. The College Cost Reduction and Access Act will boost college financial aid by more than \$20 billion over the next five years – including increasing financial aid by \$2,217,665 for college students in New York.

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